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Viewing cable 06CAIRO2364, DEFMIN TANTAWI AND U/S JOSEPH DISCUSS IRAN, MIDDLE

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06CAIRO2364**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06CAIRO2364	2006-04-19 14:57	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Cairo

Appears in these articles:

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RHMFIS/HQ USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY 0069

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 002364

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2016

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SUBJECT: DEFMIN TANTAWI AND U/S JOSEPH DISCUSS IRAN, MIDDLE
EAST WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION FREE ZONE, FMF, AND
BILATERAL RELATIONS

Classified by Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone for reasons
1.4(b) and (d).

Summary

1. (C) Minister of Defense Field Marshal Tantawi told Arms Control and International Security Under Secretary Robert Joseph April 13 that Egypt: shares U.S. concerns over Iran's effort to acquire nuclear weapons, will discuss possible measures to combat Iran's aims, resents threats of a possible reduction in military assistance, and believes that the U.S. does not value sufficiently Egypt's contribution to regional stability. U/S Joseph told Tantawi that: Iran's nuclear

program poses a critical and immediate threat to the region; Egypt should publicly denounce Iran's program and support the Proliferation Security Initiative and other defensive measures to bolster international security; and that while Congressional questions regarding security assistance are legitimate, the Administration supports the continuation of security assistance to Egypt. End summary.

Iran

12. (C) U/S Robert Joseph, joined by the Ambassador, the CENTCOM J-5, Joseph's delegation and Embassy representatives, told DefMin Tantawi on April 13 that Iran's nuclear weapons program poses both an immediate threat and a long term challenge to the region that must be countered with greater international resolve. After Joseph reviewed the implications of Iran's progress in its nuclear program, Tantawi asked how Iran got its nuclear "know how." Joseph explained that among other possible sources, the A.Q. Khan network helped Iran's already strong cadre of scientists to develop its current capability on uranium conversion, enrichment, and weaponization capabilities. Iran's recent statements, Joseph said, indicated that it will not comply with the UNSC Presidential Statement or with its IAEA obligations and will instead move to full-scale enrichment. As a result of Iran's actions, this issue is at a "critical stage," a "very dangerous point."

13. (C) In light of this, Joseph stressed, the international community, with Egypt playing a leading role, must consider taking steps such as sanctions and a range of defensive measures to dissuade or counter Iranian efforts. Among others, these measures include:
--disrupting Iranian financial networks and technology/equipment procurement by Iranian front companies;
--imposing sanctions;
--fielding missile defense capabilities and strengthening early warning data sharing;
--conducting combined military training and exercises, including passive defenses for and responses to the use of chemical and biological weapons; and
--bolstering support for the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Signaling strong international resolve, using the full range of measures available, will defend U.S. interests and those of its friends and allies while at the same time enhancing prospects for diplomacy. After thanking Tantawi for Egypt's support on Iran thus far, Joseph urged Egypt to endorse the PSI, underscoring that success will require tangible concerted action as well as continued dialogue.

14. (C) Tantawi declined to comment on the request to endorse PSI, but stressed that a nuclear-armed Iran would worsen Egypt's already bad relationship with that country. Tantawi said that sanctions would backfire unless they target the regime only, and not the Iranian people. Tantawi then promised to discuss the Iranian file with FM Aboul Gheit after Joseph's meeting with him (septel).

Tantawi concerned about threats to military assistance

15. (C) Joseph told Tantawi that the U.S. would like to expand the areas of U.S.-Egyptian cooperation and said the Administration will work proactively to educate Members of Congress on Egypt's valuable contributions to regional stability in order to ensure the continuation of military assistance. Joseph cautioned that Congress will look closely at a range of issues including, for example, Egypt's support on Iran, its efforts to help counter weapons of mass destruction, its role in Darfur, and the pace of democratic reform. In this context, there are certain things that Egypt must do to build support in Congress.

¶6. (C) Tantawi responded that while bilateral relations with the U.S. have always been good, Egypt and the Egyptian people resent the perception in Congress that Egypt must earn its assistance. "Our respect is being violated and our dignity is threatened," Tantawi said. In Tantawi's view, the impact on the relationship, and especially on the armed forces, is very bad. "If we agree that, as equals, we both gain from the relationship, we can better cooperate to achieve our interests," Tantawi said. "Don't spoil the relationship by threatening our military assistance" because this form of pressure "will not work." After complaining about the U.S. decision not to release new defense systems, Tantawi asked Joseph (again) to tell Congress of Egypt's value and argued that Egypt's cooperation with the U.S. has been steadfast. Egypt even disposed of the former USSR-donated chemical weapons it received decades ago just because the U.S. requested it, Tantawi argued. Noting that Mubarak proposed the creation of a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone, Tantawi said solving the Israeli-Palestinian problem would eliminate the need for WMD.

¶7. (C) Joseph said that while the WMD Free Zone is a worthwhile goal, the international community must remain focused on Iran -- a clear and immediate problem confronting us today. "We must stand together to prevent future Irans," Joseph urged. When Tantawi said that sources of civilian nuclear energy will remain critical, Joseph agreed and said the U.S. is exploring ways to shape the future of nuclear energy while at the same time advancing shared nonproliferation objectives. Tantawi requested more information on the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership.

¶8. (U) The Under Secretary's staff cleared this message.
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